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PATENT

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MOBILE TELEPHONE STATION

This application claims priority based on U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial Number 60/462,977, entitled "Mobile Telephone Station", and filed April 15, 2003.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Figure 1 illustrates a perspective view of a receptacle in accordance with one version of the present invention.

Figure 2 illustrates a perspective view of one version of a station comprising a receptacle portion and an accessory portion comprising a square picture frame.

Figure 3 illustrates a top view of the station of Figure 2.

Figure 4 illustrates a front view of a version of the station comprising a receptacle portion and an accessory portion comprising a triangular picture frame.

Figure 5 illustrates a front view of a version of a station comprising a receptacle portion and an accessory portion comprising a circular picture frame.

Figure 6 illustrates a perspective view of a version of a station comprising a receptacle portion and an accessory portion comprising a version of a pen and paper holder.

Figure 7 illustrates a version of a pen retainer on a pen and paper holder accessory.

Figure 8 illustrates another version of a pen retainer in a pen and paper holder accessory.

Figure 9 illustrates a version of a paper retainer in a pen and paper holder.

Figure 10 illustrates a perspective view of a version of a station comprising a receptacle portion and an accessory portion comprising a key holder.

Figure 11 illustrates another version of a key retainer different from the version of a key retainer shown in Figure 10.

Figure 12 illustrates a version of a station comprising a receptacle portion having a key retainer secured thereto.

Figure 13 illustrates a perspective view of a version of a station comprising a receptacle portion and an accessory portion comprising a message board.

Figure 14 illustrates a perspective view of a version of a station comprising a receptacle portion and an accessory portion comprising a different version of a message board.

Figure 15A illustrates a version of stabilizing means comprising an easel arm.

Figure 15B illustrates another version of stabilizing means comprising a magnet.

Figure 15C illustrates another version of stabilizing means comprising a plurality of apertures.

Figure 16A illustrates a version of stabilizing means comprising an easel arm integrated on a common back of one version of a station.

Figure 16B illustrates another version of stabilizing means comprising magnets on the second exterior portion supplemented by magnets on the back of the accessory portion.

Figure 16C illustrates a version of stabilizing means comprising an aperture on the second exterior portion complemented by an aperture on the back of the accessory portion.

Figure 17 illustrates a side cross-sectional view of an aperture defining a cavity removably receiving mounting means extending from a wall.

Figure 18 illustrates a top view of a receptacle portion having an interior surface comprising padding.

Figure 19 illustrates an alternative version of a station comprising two receptacle portions.

Figure 20 illustrates yet another version of a station comprising a multiple use receptacle portion.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF VERSIONS OF THE INVENTION

Although the disclosure hereof is detailed and exact in order to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention, the physical versions herein disclosed merely exemplify the invention which may be embodied in other specific structure. The scope of the invention is defined in the claims appended hereto.

Figures 1-20 illustrate various versions of a mobile telephone station **10** in accordance with the present invention. The station **10** may be used for simply storing a mobile telephone **12** while it is not in use or for holding the mobile telephone during recharging periods. In one version, the station **10** is located near an electric outlet **14** in which a battery charger **16** may be plugged at an outlet end **18** thereof for recharging the battery (not shown) of the mobile telephone using the charging end **20** thereof.

As shown in Figure 1, in one version, the station **10** comprises a receptacle **22** having a compartment **24** configured for removably receiving a mobile telephone **12**. In other versions, the receptacle **22** comprises a bottom **26**, one or more upstanding sides **28** and a top opening **30**, the bottom **26** and sides **28** defining the compartment **24** configured to receive the mobile telephone **12** through the top opening **30**. In yet other versions, one or more clips **32**, as shown by example in Figure 1, are provided on a first exterior portion **34** of the sides **28** for removably retaining the wire or cord **36** of a battery charger **16**. In yet other versions, stabilizing means **38** are provided on a second exterior portion **40** of the sides **28** for locating the station **10** as desired on a surface **42** or against an object **44** such as a wall. Examples of stabilizing means **38** are shown in Figures 15A-17, and include an extendable-retractable easel arm **46**, apertures **48** for receiving mounting members **50** such as tacks, pegs, nails or screws extending from a wall **44**, and one or more adhesive strips or magnets **52**.

In an alternative version shown in Figures 2-14, the station **10** comprises a receptacle portion **22** and an accessory portion **54** adjacently secured to the receptacle portion to define a common back **56**. As shown in Figures 16A-16C, in one version, the common back **56** includes the second exterior portion **40** of the upstanding sides **28**. In other versions, the back **58** of the accessory portion **54** comprises stabilizing means **38** for locating the station **10** that are complimentary or supplementary to the stabilizing means of the receptacle portion **22**. In yet other versions, the common back **56** comprises integrated stabilizing means **38** for the accessory portion **54** and receptacle portion **22**.

The accessory portion **54** of the station **10** may comprise any useful or ornamental household device. As shown in Figures 2, 6, 10 and 13, in various versions the accessory portion **54** may comprise a picture frame **60**, a pen and paper holder **62**, a key holder **64**, and a message board **66**.

Referring now to Figures 2-5, a picture frame **60** comprises one or a plurality of frame members **68** defining a sleeve **70** and a viewing window **72**. In one version, the sleeve **70** is configured for receiving variably-sized pictures and photographs **74**. In other versions, the sleeve **70** is configured for receiving a standard 3 ½ inch x 5 inch photograph **74**. In yet other versions, the sleeve **70** is configured for receiving a standard 4 inch x 6 inch photograph **74**. One of the frame members **68** may comprise a slot **76** for removably inserting a picture or photograph **74** into the sleeve **70**.

The one or plurality of frame members **68** may define any configuration which provides a lateral edge **78** on one of the members **68** suitable for securing to the receptacle **22**. In one version, the frame member or members **68** define a configuration selected from the group of shapes consisting of a triangle (Figure 4), a square (Figure 2), a rectangle, and a circle (Figure 5).

Referring now to Figures 6-9, a pen and paper holder **62** comprises a generally flat panel **80** having a lateral edge **78** suitable for securing to the receptacle **22** and having a pen retainer **82** and a paper pad retainer **84**. As shown in Figure 6, in one version, the pen retainer **82** comprises a strap **86**. As shown in Figure 7, in other versions, the pen retainer **82** comprises a sleeve **88**. As shown in Figure 8, in yet other versions, the pen retainer **82** comprises opposing retention brackets **90** defining a retention space **92**, the opposing retention brackets **90** configured for frictionally retaining a pen, pencil or other writing utensil **94** within the retention space **92**.

Referring now to Figures 6 and 9, the paper pad retainer **84** generally comprises a pocket **96**. In one version, the pocket **96** comprises a bottom **98**, upstanding side walls **100** and a front piece **102** extending between the side walls, and may be configured of variable dimensions in order to removably receive pads of paper **104** of varying sizes. In other versions, the pocket **96** is configured to removably and closely receive a generally rigid backing **106** from a pad of paper **104** such that the paper **108** is cantileveredly supported by the backing **106** within the pocket **96**.

It will be understood by those of ordinary skill in the art that any reference to a pen **94** includes any suitable writing utensil, such as a pen, pencil, marker or crayon.

Referring now to Figures 10-11, a key holder **64** comprises a generally flat panel **80** having a lateral edge **78** suitable for securing to the receptacle **22**, and having one or more key retainers **110** extending substantially outwardly therefrom. In one version, a key retainer **110** comprises a hook or peg **112** configured to be removably received by a key chain **114** or a hole **118** in a single key **116**. In other versions, a key retainer **110** comprises a ledge **120** configured for supporting a key **116** or a set of keys on a key chain **114**.

It will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art that one or more key retainers **110** may be secured directly to a third exterior portion **122** of the receptacle **22** rather than to a generally flat panel **80**, as shown in Figure 12. In one version, the station **10** comprises a key holder **64** secured to the third exterior portion **122** and an accessory portion **54** other than a key holder.

Referring now to Figures 13-14, a message board **66** comprises a generally flat panel **80** having a lateral edge **78** suitable for securing to the receptacle **22** and defining a writing area **124**. In one version, the message board **66** comprises a chalk board **126**. In other versions, the message board **66** comprises a dry- or wet-erase board **128**. In yet other versions, the message board **66** further comprises a lip **130** configured for retaining one or more suitable writing utensils **132**, such as chalk or markers. In yet other versions, the lip **130** is also configured

for retaining erasing means **134** for erasing the writing area **124**, such as a conventional eraser **136** or a wiping cloth **138**.

The receptacle **22** may be of any dimension for defining a suitable compartment **24** for removably receiving a mobile telephone **12**. In one version, the receptacle **22** has a height between about 3 inches and about 7 inches. In other versions, the receptacle **22** has a depth between about 3 inches and about 5 inches. In yet other versions, the receptacle **22** has a width between about 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches and about 6 inches. In yet other versions, the receptacle **22** is about 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches tall, about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and about 4 inches wide.

The cross sectional configuration of the compartment **24** may be generally rectilinear or circular. In one rectilinear version, the compartment **24** has cross sectional dimensions of between about 2 and about 3 inches in depth and between about 3 and about 4 inches in width. In other rectilinear versions, the compartment **24** has cross section dimensions of about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep and about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide. In one circular version, the compartment **24** has a major cross sectional diameter between about 3 inches and about 4 inches. In other circular versions, the compartment **24** has a major cross sectional diameter of about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

In one version, the total width of the station **10** including a receptacle portion **22** and an accessory portion **54** is between about 8 inches and about 12 inches. In other versions, the total width of the station **10** is about 10 inches.

In versions comprising a picture frame **60**, the viewing window **72** has an area between about 15 square inches and about 30 square inches. In versions comprising a message board **66**, the writing area **124** has an area between about 15 square inches and about 40 square inches.

Referring now to Figures 15A-17, stabilizing means **38** for locating the station **10** may be provided in connection with the station. Stabilizing means **38** may be provided for selectively supporting the station **10** on a surface **42** such as a table, desk, ledge, windowsill or countertop. In one version, stabilizing means **38** comprises an easel arm **46** that is selectively retractable and extendable. In other versions, an extension restrictor **140** is provided extending between the back **56** or second exterior portion **40** of the station **10** and the easel arm **46**.

Stabilizing means **38** may also be provided for mounting or affixing the station **10** to an object **44** such as a wall or a metallic surface such as a refrigerator or filing cabinet. In one version, stabilizing means **38** comprises one or more adhesive strips or magnets **52** secured to the back **56**. In other versions, stabilizing means **38** comprises one or more apertures **48** defining a cavity **142** in the back **56** configured to supportively receive one or more mounting members **50** extending from the object **44**. In yet other versions, mounting members **50** comprise nails, screws, tacks, or pegs.

As illustrated in Figure 18, the interior surface **144** of the compartment **24** may be substantially lined with padding **146**. In one version, the padding **146** comprises a felt lining. In other versions, the padding **146** comprises a rubber

coating. In yet other versions, the padding **146** comprises foam. In yet other versions, additional rubber or foam pads **147** may be removably inserted into the compartment **24**. The pads **147** are configured to prevent smaller mobile telephones **12** from being positioned substantially at the bottom of the compartment. In one version, a pad **147** is inserted so that it is positioned at the bottom of the compartment and has a thickness configured to substantially upwardly boost the position of a mobile telephone **12** within the compartment. In other versions, the pad **147** is inserted so that it is positioned substantially against the interior surface **144** or padding **146** of the compartment **24** in order to wedge a smaller mobile telephone **12** in an upper position in the compartment.

As illustrated in Figures 19-20, a station **10** may be provided with more than one receptacle **22** or with a multi-use receptacle **22** configured for receiving two or more mobile telephones **12**.

In operation, the station **10** is located as desired by the user thereof with the stabilizing means **38**. In one version, the user locates the station **10** in a designated position for storing the user's mobile telephone **12** during non-use and/or during periods of recharging. In other versions, the designated position is relatively near an electrical outlet **14**. The user inserts the mobile telephone **12** into the compartment **24** through the top opening **30**. In one version, the mobile telephone **12** is inserted right-side-up. In other versions, the mobile telephone **12** is inserted upside-down. A mobile telephone battery charger **16** having an outlet end **18** and a charging end **20** may be used to recharge a mobile telephone battery

(not shown). With the charging end **20** plugged into the mobile telephone **12** and the outlet end **18** plugged into an electrical outlet **14**, the mobile telephone **12** may be inserted into the compartment **24**. The wire or cord **36** connecting the charging end **20** to the outlet end **18** may be inserted into the clips **32** for retaining the wire in place. During periods of mobile telephone use or non-storage in the station **10**, the battery charger wire **36** may be kept retained in the clips **32** with the charging end **20** left free either dangling or otherwise retained within the compartment **24** to prevent dangling. The station **10** is selectively provided with an accessory portion **54** as desired by the user, versions of which are disclosed herein.

While specific versions of the invention have been shown and described herein for purposes of illustration, the protection offered by any patent which may issue upon this application is not strictly limited to the disclosed version; but rather extends to all structures, steps and arrangements which fall fairly within the scope of the claims which are appended hereto: